

# Acts 2.1–12


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## *The Gifted Life: receiving the Holy Spirit*

Amington

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The Life You've Always Wanted (7)

I've said a few times now that, no matter how hard I tried, I could not run a marathon tomorrow – because I simply haven't trained for it.  I'd end up being that poor guy in the middle, I suspect!

And the need for training applies to our spiritual life as well. Being a disciple of Jesus – following Jesus – means learning from him how to live our lives full of the fruit of the Spirit, it means growing and becoming more like him.

It requires a lot of effort and discipline – like training to run a marathon or to play a musical instrument – but unlike them, it also needs a little extra *something*, something *more*.

And that something, or rather *someone*, is the Holy Spirit.

God gives the gift of the Holy Spirit to *all* his children – and it is up to us to make the most of that gift. Paul says it like this:

**Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you** (Philippians 2.12-13).

It's the difference between a rowing boat and a sailing boat. ¶ In a rowing boat *we* are in charge, *we* are in control: the harder and faster we row, the quicker we will go.

¶ But in a sailing boat, we are utterly dependent upon the wind: it does all the work, and without it we won't go anywhere. Equally, if the wind is blowing, but we haven't learned how to put the sails up, we won't go anywhere *either*: sailing across a lake needs *both* training *and* for the wind to blow.

So when we talk about training ourselves to follow Jesus, *that* is the kind of picture we should have: not a rower heaving and straining on some oars, but a sailor reading and following the wind.

Today we celebrate Pentecost: 50 days after Easter, the day the church was born – why? Because it was the day God fulfilled a prophecy centuries old, and sent his Holy Spirit on *all*: young, old, male, female – it doesn't matter.

¶ [show video – Who is the Holy Spirit? Alpha Film Series.](#)

¶ He is God's gift to you: do you want him, do you want *more* of him, and how will you make the most of that wonderful gift?